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August 15, 2000

Mr. Steve Ritchie, Acting Executive Director  
Cal-Fed Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth St., Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Final Programmatic EIS/EIR

Dear Mr. Ritchie:

As a Madera County farmer, I am concerned with the final Cal-Fed EIS/EIR released July 21. I respectfully request you give us more time to review and comment on your document. It is much too large to digest and much too complex to understand. I also request you hold hearings to explain what the Cal-Fed program will mean to us.

Through this entire process, I have been concerned about the loss of farmland, loss of water and the lack of progress on storage. As California's population continues to grow and the environment continues to require more water, that water should come from newly developed storage, not from farmers.

Water for farms is used to grow plants. Those plants give off oxygen and help clean the air. Farming provides wildlife habitat while producing food. I continue to pay taxes on that land and survive on the income. This farmland has been in my family for generations. It is sustainable. I am not destroying the environment; I am helping to preserve it.

Do we really want to lose thousands of acres of farmland in California and lose the habitat it provides for numerous animals and plants? Right now, the government owns about half the land in California, yet 75 percent of the wildlife habitat is on private land. Why do you think that is?

I have an answer. The animals like what we are doing. Our land and water is well managed and cared for. When the government decides to buy land because of a particular species, that species often goes elsewhere because the government fails to manage the land properly.

Again, I request you grant additional time for comments and hold public hearings before you implement the plan.

Sincerely,



Ralph Pistoiresi  
Madera County Farm Bureau

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|-----|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| cc: | Senator Dianne Feinstein | Governor Gray Davis         | Madera County Supervisors |
|     | Senator Barbara Boxer    | State Sen. Richard Monteith | Senator Jim Costa         |
|     | Rep. George Radanovich   | Assemblyman George House    | Assemblyman Dean Florez   |